WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A tape drive apparatus in which a tape serving as a recording medium is drawn out of a cartridge accommodating the tape, the drawn tape made run so as to be wound on a tape takeup reel provided in a tape drive apparatus body and a recording/reproducing operation performed by winding the tape drawn out of said cartridge around a rotary head drum, said tape drive apparatus comprising:

a prethreading mechanism for bringing the tape into contact with said rotary head drum before the tape is completely wound around said rotary head drum, wherein

dew condensation on said rotary head drum is detected by rotating said rotary head drum during a status in which the tape is brought by said prethreading mechanism into contact with said rotary head drum.

2. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein dew condensation is detected from variation in rotation of said rotary head drum.

3. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein dew condensation is detected from change in tension of the tape.

4. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein dew condensation is detected from rotation of a tape supply reel of said cartridge.

5. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said prethreading mechanism has a folding two-stage arm, and

wherein the tape is brought into contact with said rotary head drum by extending said two-stage arm.

6. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the tape is detached from said rotary head drum after the dew condensation on said rotary head drum is detected.

7. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 6, wherein drying of said rotary head drum is expedited by rotating said rotary head drum during a status in which the tape is detached from said rotary head drum.

8. The tape drive apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a tape winding member for winding the tape around said rotary head drum, said tape winding member also serving as said prethreading mechanism.